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UNCLAS ISLAMABAD 015856

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN EARTHQUAKE: TRANSPORTING TENTS FROM CANADA

REF: A. A) ISLAMABAD 15769 (NOTAL)

[1](#)B. B) BUTENIS-ENGELKEN OCT 20 E-MAIL

[1](#)1. With snow already falling on some areas affected by the October 8 earthquake, getting winterized tents or other forms of shelter to those whose homes were destroyed is quickly emerging as a critical element of relief efforts. Given the magnitude of the crisis -- the current estimate is three million people were left homeless by the quake -- we will clearly need to draw on tent supplies throughout the world, and call on the resources of the international community to help transport them to Pakistan.

[1](#)2. GOP Vice Chief of Army Staff, Gen. Hayat, contacted Ambassador on October 19 and explained that a Mr. Khalid Osman, a Pakistani living in Toronto (tel: 416-938-6909) has raised funds and purchased 7500 winterized tents, each accommodating six people, and is now looking for assistance in transporting them from Canada to Pakistan. (Note: we have not been able to confirm the whereabouts of these tents or their suitability for the harsh winter climate of northern Pakistan. end note.) Apparently Mr. Osman contacted Pakistan International Airlines, which said it would take three months to transport all the tents -- clearly too long to meet the urgent need. The GOP has asked for U.S. assistance in transporting those tents to Pakistan, but our own lift capability is already taxed.

[1](#)3. Post would appreciate Department or Ottawa contacting the Canadian Government to ask that, as part of Canada's contribution to earthquake relief, it arrange to air lift these tents to Pakistan, either through milair or by chartering civilian aircraft. Providing winterized tents for 45,000 people would be a major step in addressing the shelter crisis.

[1](#)4. On October 21, Embassy raised this with Canadian High Commission in Islamabad, which is now conveying Mr. Osman's request to Ottawa.

[1](#)5. Early response would be appreciated so we can factor this into our own planning. For Department and Embassy use: should the tents prove suitable for the affected areas, and Canadian Government not be prepared to transport them to Pakistan, post will recommend using U.S. earthquake relief funds to charter aircraft to bring them to Pakistan.

CROCKER